

Summary of Comments Received on Draft Plan and Triangle Transit Staff Responses

Triangle Transit presented the Designing Better Bus Service in Durham – Draft Plan to the Durham City Council at the April 5, 2012 work session. A public hearing was held on April 16, 2012 on the plan. The following is the response from Triangle Transit staff to the questions and concerns that were raised by City Council members and the Mayor at the work session and the public at the public hearing.

- 1. There are always four children waiting for the DATA Route 10 at Githens Middle School on Old Chapel Hill Rd. I still have some concern when it comes to secondary and middle schools. Could we find one loop through Githens at 4pm that would provide some service?**

Our data sources show that on the average day, 2-3 customers use the bus to access Githens Middle School, while 13-16 customers use the bus to go to Jordan High School. The proposed Route 10T does not include a deviation to serve Githens Middle School due to the existing low ridership at the school. We have concerns about deviating the Route 10T to serve the middle school because it may cause delays for those going to Jordan High School where ridership is higher.

However, if the Route 10T were to serve both Jordan High School and Githens Middle School, passengers going to the schools would transfer from the Route 10 to the Route 10T at the University Dr and Westgate Dr bus stop. Since there is a higher demand for service to Jordan HS, the route would first go to Jordan. If the route were to serve Githens Middle School as well, those customers would have approximately a 20 minute ride on the Route 10T before getting dropped off at the school.

- 2. What cities are handling the issue of behavior better than we are? Are there any models we can follow?**

Staff will be looking into the issue of passenger behavior over the upcoming year. We will be looking into more training for operators, most likely to be provided by law enforcement. We would be happy to report back to the City Council in a few months on this topic.

- 3. Did you look at duplication with TTA buses to see if any reductions can be saved for DATA?**

We looked at the Triangle Transit and DATA services within the 15-501 corridor to see if there were ways to improve service and to remove duplicative service. The Designing Better Bus Service – Final Plan includes recommendations in scenarios 2 & 3 that improve coordination between the agencies.

Other coordination opportunities can be investigated in the future such as coordination between DATA Route 8 and Triangle Transit Route 700.

4. The plan shows DATA covering some routes that Triangle Transit now provides. Does this mean that Triangle Transit will have a lower operational cost or will Triangle Transit provide other services? What is the difference in cost and who will benefit, the City of Durham or Triangle Transit?

In all three funding scenarios, Triangle Transit will provide the same number of revenue hours as is currently being provided in the 15-501 corridor. There will not be any change to the Triangle Transit services in the base scenario (scenario 1). Once additional revenue streams are available, the Triangle Transit routes will be restructured to eliminate duplicative services with the new Route 52 (which serves some of the same travel market as the Triangle Transit Route 400). Triangle Transit will keep the same number of service hours in the 15-501 corridor. The additional revenue from the Durham County sales tax for transit will be used to supplement private revenue streams which are likely to be reduced in the future (i.e. Robertson Scholars Express Bus).

Table 8-1: Annual Hours by transit agency and funding source

	Existing (FY12)	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
City of Durham	17,590 (Route 10)	18,251 (Routes 10A, 10T)	17,261 (Route 10A)	17,261 (Route 10A)
Triangle Transit	19,608 (Routes 400, 405)	19,608 (Routes 400, 405)	19,608 (Route 405)	19,608 (Route 405)
Robertson Scholars Foundation	4,802	4,802 *	n/a	n/a
New County Revenues	n/a	n/a	6,398 (Total) 3,060 (Route 52) 3,338 (Route 405)	6,398 (Total) 3,060 (Route 52) 3,338 (Route 405)

* Service provided through a contract with Triangle Transit

5. After the route changes are implemented, there are likely to be people who did not hear about the changes ahead of time and will want to provide feedback. What processes are in place to respond to comments from the public?

Triangle Transit holds public input sessions on the first Wednesday of each month on second floor of Durham Station at 6:30pm. These input sessions provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback to Triangle Transit staff about the bus service. Comments are also collected by the GoTriangle Regional Call Center (919-485-RIDE), the Triangle Transit service planning phone line (919-485-PLAN), and online at dbbs.gotriangle.org.

Triangle Transit staff will respond to customer feedback as it is received. If it is determined that a service change is required to address customer concerns, Triangle Transit will follow the “Durham Transit Service Change Approval Process” adopted by the Durham City Council when Triangle Transit entered into an agreement with the City of Durham to manage the Durham Area Transit Authority. This policy identifies the appropriate decision-making body for each category of service change once a service change recommendation has been developed.

6. Provide DATA bus service to Central Professional Park at 2609 N. Duke St.

At the Durham City Council Public Hearing, there was a request for new service to Central Professional Park at 2609 North Duke St. After evaluating existing DATA routes in that area, we have included a recommendation for an extension to the Route 1c for scenario 3, although it is unfunded. After serving Northgate Mall, Route 1c would continue to Durham Regional Hospital via Broad St, Stadium Dr, and Duke St.

We investigated the option of deviating Route 4 to serve Central Professional Park instead of North Duke Mall (Duke St and Horton Rd) for some trips. Given that there are a lot of customers using the stops near the North Duke Mall and there is not a lot of stop activity at the bus stop on the current Route 1 that is within a quarter mile to the Central Professional Park, we think that deviating the Route 4 to serve the Central Professional Park would be a disservice to the current customers. For this reason, we have not included a recommendation to serve Central Professional Park at this time, but have included it as a potential service in the future.

7. Ensure that patients can safely access Duke Clinics.

Triangle Transit has met with the Duke Clinics staff to discuss DATA bus service to their locations. We are working together to identify safe and accessible bus stop locations for patients at these locations as we prioritize bus stop improvements for the upcoming year.

8. Do not eliminate service to Woodcroft Pkwy on the DATA Route 10.

At the Durham City Council Public Hearing, there was a customer complaint about the elimination of bus service to Woodcroft on the Route 10. Woodcroft Pkwy will continue to be served Mon-Sat during the daytime (until 7pm) on Route 41. This route will be connected to the Route 12 so that customers do not need to transfer buses to get downtown. The estimated travel time to get downtown from Woodcroft is 50 minutes while it takes 60 minutes today on Route 10.

At night and on Sundays, there will be no service to Woodcroft Pkwy. The closest bus stop will be on Fayetteville St or NC 54 near the Harris Teeter on the Route 7.

Change to the recommendations from the Draft Plan

9. Instead of creating a new Route 20, the Final Plan recommends a Route 10B.

Due to high boardings along Chapel Hill Rd and University Dr near South Square Mall, staff has re-evaluated service in this area. Instead of a new Route 20, which could have low ridership, staff is recommending a new Route 10B that serves many of the same bus stops as Route 10 along Morehead Ave, Chapel Hill Rd, and University Dr. Route 10B would also serve Shannon Rd, MLK Pkwy, Westgate Dr, and Tower Blvd that are currently served by Route 5. While the Route 10B will serve many of the stops as the Route 10, it would not go all the way to New Hope Commons. Instead, the endpoint of Route 10B would be at Emerald Pond on Pickett Rd. Route 10B would depart Durham Station at :15 after the hour. When additional funding is available in scenario 3, another bus is recommended to be added to the route that would depart Durham Station at :45 past the hour.